



*"Mankind is drawn to the heavens for the same reason we were once drawn into unknown lands and across the open sea. We choose to explore space because doing so improves our lives, and lifts our national spirit."*

President George W. Bush  
Jan. 14, 2004

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## Space Center Roundup

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# Roundup

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SPACE CENTER ROUNDUP

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center



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## The Station gets a *new crew*

Astronaut Mike Fincke (left), Expedition 9 Space Station Science Officer and Flight Engineer, and Cosmonaut Gennady I. Padalka, Commander, pose for their crew portrait while in training at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia, prior to their April 18 launch in a Soyuz TMA-4 spacecraft.

May  
2004  
Houston, Texas

# Beak Sends...

A MESSAGE FROM CENTER DIRECTOR LT. GEN. JEFFERSON D. HOWELL JR.



## Improving our culture

Since the *Columbia* Accident Investigation Board report was released last summer, much has been said about our culture and its contribution to the environment that allowed the accident to occur. Some of us are in denial that culture had anything to do with the mishap; however, findings by the CAIB as well as local surveys and activities such as Safety and Mission Success Day have all resulted in a realization that our organization, our Center, our team has inherent flaws that stymie healthy communication at all levels. In too many cases, employees feel that they are unable to speak honestly or present a different or opposing view because of fear of retribution.

Something has to be done about this. The demands of human spaceflight with its inherent risks require that we, as a team, work at peak efficiency and at the highest level of professional excellence. This cannot be done in a workplace that does not allow open communication and trust at all levels. Be assured that our Administrator is taking proactive measures to fix this problem. He has made this a priority issue for the NASA senior leadership team to address.

One of our first actions has been to hire BST, a company of experts in identifying organizational weaknesses and assisting in improving leadership skills at all levels in the workplace. They will be working throughout NASA and will be joining us at Johnson Space Center in the near future to help us enhance our teamwork. Let us welcome them and use their expertise to best effect.

Our JSC Senior Staff has also partnered with contractor senior management to find ways of improving trust and better communications between civil servants and contractors. We have already had several productive meetings and have built a plan of action to help improve our effectiveness as a leadership team.

Improving culture isn't easy! However what I have just described to you are some initial first steps in the right direction. I hope it is clear to you that we realize leadership must improve before we can expect the organization to improve. You will be the best judge on whether or not that happens. I'm looking forward to getting your feedback as we go forward. Keep the faith and remember:

**It's great to be alive and in Houston!**



## Johnson Space Center employees and contractors achieve “Stellar Awards” Neil Armstrong receives the National Space Trophy

by Debbie Nguyen

Those who go into the space industry go in reaching for the stars – recently a select few were able to obtain them.

Each year the nonprofit organization Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) receives nominations from NASA, the military and industry leaders in human and crewless spaceflight companies to honor those who have made eminent contributions in the field of space exploration with the Stellar Award.

Previous winners of this prestigious honor include International Space Station and Shuttle Flight Director John Curry, Space Station Program Manager Bill Gerstenmaier, the NASA KC-135 Reduced Gravity Student Flight Opportunity Program and the JPL Mars Pathfinder Team.

Among the 600 people who attended this year's black-tie event were Johnson Space Center Director Lt. Gen. Jefferson D. Howell Jr., former Astronaut Neil Armstrong and NASA's first flight director Christopher Kraft Jr. Miles O'Brien, CNN space correspondent, entertained the crowd as the Master of Ceremonies. Astronauts Sandra Magnus, Ph.D., and James F. Reilly II, Ph.D., presented the awards.

This year's recipient of the RNASA National Space Trophy was Astronaut emeritus Neil Armstrong, the first human to walk on the Moon. RNASA's Board of Directors awards the National Space Trophy annually to an individual who has made a substantial impact in the aerospace industry. Past honorees include Astronaut Capt. John Young, former

Space Shuttle Program Manager Tommy Holloway, the President's Commission on Moon, Mars and Beyond Chairman Edward C. "Pete" Aldridge Jr. and former President George H.W. Bush.

Kraft, the 1999 National Space Trophy recipient and former Manned Spacecraft Center Director, presented the award to Armstrong "for his contributions to the U.S. space program as the first explorer to land a manned spacecraft on the Moon and the first human to step on the surface of the Moon."

During his speech, Armstrong, who rarely makes public appearances, voiced his support and urged unity for the Vision for Space Exploration.

"The success of the endeavor will also be dependent on the degree to which the aerospace community, all of us – government, industry, and academia – can coalesce their forces and converge on a common goal," Armstrong said. "Our economy can certainly afford an effort of this magnitude, but the public must believe the benefits to society deserve the investment. We know the advancement of knowledge and the rate of progress is proportional to the risk encountered...but to limit the program in the name of eliminating the risk is no virtue."

Awards and nominations are organized into four categories based on age and length of service. Beginning on page 4 are the winners from JSC.



EARLY-CAREER: UP TO AGE 33



**Elizabeth Bauer of JSC**  
Bauer, who graduated in mechanical engineering from Texas A&M, started her first cooperative education student tour at JSC in 1990. Her role as engineering project manager has been instrumental in the development of the International Space Station Human Research Facility, which celebrated its third anniversary on March 8.

★ Bauer said, “I’m in front of people who are just like me who are trying to do their job day in and day out. But at the same time, I’m also in front of these significant historical people. One of the reasons why I wanted to go was to ‘share air’ with Neil Armstrong and Chris Kraft.”



**Natalia Robarge of TechTrans International**  
Robarge’s leadership and implementation of operational concepts and training programs for Mission Control Center interpreters has assured international mission safety and success.

★ Beth Williams, President of TechTrans International, said, “If any company had a Natasha (Natalia), they’d be the number one company in the world. She is the most amazing young woman...she can do anything!”

MID-CAREER: AGE 34-50



**Paul S. Hill of JSC**  
For his leadership and technical expertise of the Early Sighting Assessment Team, and leadership during the early stages of the on-orbit maintenance of the Orbiter Thermal Protection System.

★ Paul F. Dye, Lead Flight Director in the JSC Space Shuttle Operations Division, said, “Paul is exceptionally sharp, and an outstanding leader. Not only does he see the big picture – he is very good at the detailed level.”

LATE-CAREER: OVER AGE 50



**Royce G. Forman of JSC**  
In the 45 years that Forman has been at JSC, he has played a significant role in developing the NASGRO Fracture Mechanics software package, which is now internationally accepted as the standard code for fracture control analysis of space hardware.

★ José M. Hernández, Branch Chief of the Materials and Processes Branch at JSC, said, “Having Royce in the Materials and Processes Branch has certainly been a pleasure. Especially when one realizes he’s the same Forman my college fracture mechanics textbooks referred to when they talked about the Forman and Mettu crack growth rate equation!”

LATE-CAREER: OVER AGE 50 *continued*



**Larue J. Jones of United Space Alliance**  
For his superb leadership and thorough planning for the Shuttle Avionics Integration Laboratory (SAIL) at JSC, including coordinating the implementation and testing of Space Shuttle upgrades in SAIL, which will provide a safer and more reliable Shuttle for future spaceflights.

★ Jones said, “I was very, very, surprised when I heard my name called for an award in the Late Career category. I guess I was in a state of shock for several seconds until a couple of people at the table I was sitting at brought me back to reality by reminding me that I needed to go to the stage to receive the award.”

TEAM AWARD



**STS-107 Aerothermodynamics Investigation Team**  
The combined efforts of many talented and capable people across the nation provided extremely technically complex and highly innovative reconstruction of STS-107, a critical contribution to the findings and recommendations of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board.

Team members include: Stan Bouslog, Chuck Campbell, Jose Caram, Steve Fitzgerald, Randy Lillard, Chris Madsen, all from JSC, and others from Ames Research Center, Langley Research Center, Marshall Space Flight Center and the Boeing Company.

Chuck Campbell, accepting on behalf of the team

SPACE COMMUNICATOR AWARD



**NASA-Contractor Communications Team**  
For demonstrating “integrity, excellence in performance, and commitment to the importance of human spaceflight...by meeting the most extreme challenges with courage, fortitude, dedication and compassion. Each individual’s efforts presented a human face to the public that represented the Agency long after the cameras left.”

This is a special award given to a professional communicator who has made an important contribution to the public’s understanding of and appreciation for the accomplishments of the American space program. This is the first team recipient.

Bob Jacobs, accepting on behalf of the team

Congratulations to everyone on their achievements.